

Positive Handling Policy

The Bridge



Approved by:

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the position of the Provision with regards to necessary physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of physical intervention. The use of physical intervention is only to be used after all attempts to de-escalate the situation have not worked. Wherever possible, and appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made for SEND students after consultation with the SENCo (or member of the SLT team). It is the objective of The Bridge to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of handling, reasonable force and restraint. There may be training needs for staff who work closely with learners with additional needs or disabilities.

However, all staff will be trained (as appropriate). Staff will be made aware of this policy and procedures during their induction. Training will focus on the management of behaviour and the de-escalation of situations, as well as the occasions on which restraint may be necessary, and the ways in which this might be used.

This policy has been written using advice taken from Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies (DfE 2013)

The Provision acknowledges its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEND). Equality Act 2010, SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015.

2. Physical Intervention and the Law

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

- a) Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)
- b) Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property
- c) Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.

Staff should not hesitate to act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

3. Definition of Terms

Handling – refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it necessary to make physical contact with a student to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others safety.

Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining. Use of Reasonable Force – is the application of appropriate and proportionate force required to achieve the required outcome from the handling strategy employed (see above) without further endangering the student, member of staff or others present at the time of physical intervention.

Restraint - is the positive application of force to actively prevent a child from causing significant injury* to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property. *Significant Injury would include actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self-poisoning. It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, significant injury would have followed.

4. Implementation of Physical Intervention

All members of staff working with students at the provision are authorised to handle, use reasonable force or restrain students if/when such physical intervention is necessary. No member of staff should

intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place. In all circumstances where physical intervention is or may become required members of staff should ensure that adult assistance is requested before intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving. Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint must provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour/actions before employing a physical intervention strategy and should continue to make instructions to the student and details of their intended interventions clear. The method of physical intervention employed must use the minimum reasonable force for the minimum length of time (additional guidance regarding what intervention is and is not appropriate is given in Appendix A).

5. Recording Physical Intervention

All incidents where staff feel that they have used force to modify behaviour or conduct should be recorded in the appropriate incident book in admin and in a statement to the Headteacher. It is not necessary to record every incident of contact with a child, but where a member of staff perceives that contact has been received at all negatively, they are advised to record the circumstances. The Headteacher will ensure that parents/carers are appropriately informed. For the safeguarding of both staff and student, any subsequent investigation of the situation/incident should be undertaken by a member of staff other than the one applying the physical intervention.

6. Searching Students

Below is guidance issued by the Department for Education in January 2018 entitled 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' which is applicable for all Provision s in England, and which we follow here at The Bridge: Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search learners or their possessions, without consent*, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the learner may have a prohibited item.

Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- aerosols
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used: to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the learner).
- Headteachers and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the Provision rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for. NB This includes mobile phones at The Bridge.

*The ability to give consent may be influenced by the child's age or other factors.

Any prohibited items found in learners' possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to learners. We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to Provision discipline. These items will be returned to learners after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

Searching and screening learners is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching,

screening and confiscation. Searches will be conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom will be the same sex as the student. The Bridge does not endorse and will not undertake a physical search of any students' person. Where necessary a student will be asked to remove his/her coat and/or blazer, empty all pockets, open their bags and in some circumstances remove their shoes and socks. Possessions and items of apparel that have been removed may then be searched by the staff present. If undesirable items are discovered the Provision will use its power of confiscation to retain the offending item(s). Parents/carers will be contacted to explain what has been found and any subsequent sanctions that have been applied. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to retrieve the offending property and asked to ensure that they are not brought to Provision again. In the event that illegal items are discovered then the Police may be informed immediately.

7. What is reasonable force?

1. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most Provision staff at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with learners .
2. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a learner to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. Force is used either to control learners or to restrain them.
4. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between learners or blocking a learner's path, or active physical contact such as leading a learner by the arm out of a classroom.
5. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a learner under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two learners are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
6. Provision staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the learner.
7. The Criminal Law Act (1967) allows any person to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent an offence (eg. physical assault) being committed. Reasonable minimal force must be a matter of personal judgement;

Who can use reasonable force?

All members of Provision staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the Provision .

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent learners from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used. You can use reasonable force in an unsafe or crisis situation to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a learner behaving in a way that disrupts a Provision event or a Provision trip or visit;
- prevent a learner leaving the classroom where allowing the learner to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a learner from attacking a member of staff or another learner, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a learner at risk of harming themselves or others or damage to property belonging to

anyone through physical outbursts.

You should note that:

- no more force than necessary was used;
- all non-physical interventions have been exhausted and restraint is a last resort;
- external professional support should be sought if restraint does not work.

Other issues

- account taken of accidental injury in respect of surfaces and learners' body positions
- group restraint must have 1 leader and teamwork
- only adults to be used The method of physical intervention employed must use the minimum reasonable force for the minimum length of time (additional guidance regarding what intervention is and is not appropriate is given in Appendix A).

Risk Evaluation

All staff restraining a learner must take the following into account before acting and must be guided by the following as to the nature of their intervention with regard to themselves and the learners .

- Don't put yourself at risk. Consider your size and theirs
- Weigh up how they might react based on what you know of them
- Are you in an area that might cause injury when you restrain?
- Is the learner carrying a weapon?
- Can you summon help?

Location

On Provision premises, off Provision premises, on Provision business In the immediate vicinity of the Provision.

8. Follow up - All Staff

Before the Headteacher can take further action, the following procedures MUST be followed. Go somewhere you can be quiet and relax. Inform the Executive Headteacher that you need to be kept free.

- report incident immediately to Headteacher
- complete Incident Report Book (held by Admin)
- sign and date reports
- mention time, location, main causes, progress, words spoken by learner and restrainer, duration and nature of incident
- mention steps taken to defuse situation, degree of force, how force was applied and duration of force
- include names of witnesses
- include reasons for intervention
- include description of any injury to anyone and medical attention received and action taken

Use of behavioural procedures and restraint is a sensitive topic. This document is meant to provide reassurance and support to staff and to ensure that practice in Provision s is always in the best interests of the learners concerned.

Appendix A – Guidance on appropriate and inappropriate intervention

How can you intervene – examples include

- interposing of restrainer's body
- blocking a learner's path
- holding
- guiding in a particular direction
- leading by hand or arm
- shepherding with hand placed in the small of the back
- minimum force/minimum duration

You cannot:

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
- use the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
- use the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest;
- use the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.
- use any hitting, kicking or punching
- deliberately inflict pain
- restrict breathing
- use any arm, leg, throat, finger locks or holds that result in learners being put face down on the ground

You must:

- avoid genital, breast or buttock areas
- ensure no weight put on spines or abdomens
- use minimum restriction of limb movements related to danger of injury to restrainer, learner or others
- avoid moving learners unless they are in a dangerous location

Appendix B – Sample reporting form for PI

Physical Intervention Record Form

Name of child/young person Date of Birth.....

Is this young person a looked after child/SEN/vulnerability?

When did the incident occur?

Date	Day of week	Time	Where?
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Staff involved

Name	Designation	Team Teach trained?	Involved: physically? (P) as observer? (O)	Staff signature

Please describe the incident and include:

1. What was happening before?
2. What do you think triggered this behaviour?
3. What de-escalating techniques were used prior to physical intervention?
4. Why was a PI deemed necessary?
5. Any other information relevant to include.

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Team Teach technique(s) used (tick as appropriate)

Technique	Standing/escort	Sitting/chairs	Kneeling	Ground
Breakaway/defensive				
One person				
Two people				

Please give details below of hold, e.g. single elbow, double elbow, wrap, etc.

How long was the child/young person held?

If the child/young person was held on the ground: Did they go to ground independently?*

(e.g. did the child lift their weight off the floor, or go deadweight)

Were they taken to ground by staff?*

**tick as appropriate*

Good practice dictates that Provision s should review what happened and consider what lessons can be learned, which may have implications for the future management of the learner. These need not be added to this form but should be incorporated in the individual plans for the child.

Has the child/young person been held before?	Yes/No
<i>A child/young person should have an individual plan clearly detailing reactive strategies and physical intervention approaches if they have been involved in physical interventions on more than one occasion.</i>	
Does the individual support plan need to be reviewed as a result of this incident?	Yes/No
Does the risk assessment need to be reviewed as a result of this incident?	Yes/No
If yes, who will action and when? (less than four weeks)	

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Who was the incident reported to, and when?

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Was there any medical intervention needed?

Yes/No

Include names of any injured person and brief details of injuries

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Was the learner debriefed?

Yes/No

Were staff offered a debrief?

Yes/No

Was it taken up?

Yes/No

Parents/carers were informed

Date	Time	By whom?	By direct contact, telephone, letter?

Form completed by:	Name	Designation	Date and time